CAPABLE PARTNERS PROGRAMMATIC OBJECTIVES

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The Academy for Educational Development
In partnership with
Management Systems International

Semi-Annual Report No. 1
August 11, 2003 - March 31, 2004

and

Updated Implementation Plan No. 1
April 1, 2004 – September 30, 2004

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During this reporting period, the CAP staff was assembled and the program office established at AED. Extensive planning sessions took place, resulting in the formulation and approval of the Year One Implementation Plan and the kick-off of the Advocacy Fellows Program, as CAP's first Global Core Initiative (GCI #1). These and other highlights for the period are described more fully in the pages that follow. They include:

♦ With the assistance of USAID operating units, NGO networks from 15 countries in all four regions were selected to participate in GCI #1. The first Advocacy Fellows workshop took place in Accra, Ghana from 22 to 27 February.

♦ Two USAID Missions decided to make Associate Awards to sponsor an additional participant for GCI #1. In Ghana, this involved a representative of a second NGO network, while in Sudan, the award is for participation by a second representative from the network already identified.

♦ The CAP web portal, www.NGOConnect.NET, was created and includes a growing number of resources. Also, it is already being used to facilitate communications among GCI #1 participants and others.

♦ The first gathering of CAP Resource Organizations was held on November 14, 2003, and included a briefing on CAP, as well as a thorough discussion of how this Leader with Associate Award can be used as an effective tool for marketing NGO-strengthening services within USAID.

♦ Documents and procedures related to the Innovation Grants for NGO Networks program were developed, including the Annual Program Statement (APS) which will be used to solicit proposals.

During the remainder of year one, the following major tasks will be vigorously pursued:

♦ The second GCI #1 Advocacy Fellows workshop is set for June 14-17, 2004 in Istanbul, Turkey.

♦ Installation within all GCI #1 participating organizations of the Institutional Development Framework (IDF) will be completed, resulting in baseline data for tracking indicators in the CAP PMP, as well as individualized plans for organizational development and subsequent technical assistance for each organization.

♦ A second meeting of CAP Resource Organizations is scheduled for June 3.

♦ Solicitation and review of Innovation Grant proposals will take place, with the award of first-round grants estimated to take place in mid-October.

- ♦ Planning for GCI #2 on Monitoring & Evaluation will be initiated in September.

- ♦ A marketing plan for the promotion of Associate Awards will be prepared.

- ♦ CAP M&E systems and tools will be refined.

The next semi-annual report will be submitted by October 31, 2004, and will cover the remainder of Year One.

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Semi-Annual Report and Implementation Plan

I.   Introduction

The Capable Partners Program (CAP) Cooperative Agreement was awarded on August 11 and signed on September 2, 2003. The period covered by this report has been dedicated primarily to putting in place the essential operating systems of the CAP program. In addition to starting up the program, CAP began implementation of the first Global Core Initiative and negotiated two associate awards.

Start up activities included:

- Establishing program office and procedures
- Refining program approach and activities with CTO and PVC staff
- Developing CAP marketing message and brochure
- Formulating the Year One Work Plan
- Revising the Performance Monitoring Plan
- Orienting CAP Resource Organizations
- Creating NGOConnect.net

Activities for the implementation of GCI 1 included:

- Setting objectives for the first Advocacy Fellows Workshop
- Soliciting nominations for participants from Missions and Operating Units
- Selecting participants from those nominated
- Designing the conceptual framework and materials for the workshop
- Selecting a location for the first workshop and handling all logistics
- Creating pre-workshop materials and assignments for participants
- Implementing the program with the participants
- Evaluating the workshop

II.   CAP Program Management

A.   Office Set-up

The core members of the CAP team from AED and MSI moved into office space together in AED's Washington, DC, headquarters building.

B.   Year One Implementation Plan

The Year One Implementation Plan was reviewed and approved by PVC on January 21, 2004. Table 1 summarizes CAP's progress on the Year One activities that took place during this reporting period and updates Year One activities scheduled for quarters three and four. With two exceptions, all items scheduled to be completed during the first two quarters are on schedule. The Annual Program Statement (APS) for Innovation Grants

will be issued in the third quarter, and technical assistance in organization development for GCI1 organizations will begin as Institutional Development Framework (IDF) assessments are completed with the Participating Organizations.

Table 1: Year One Implementation Plan and Updates

YEAR ONE ACTIVITIES	Target completion date				Completion status and/or comments
	Qtr. 1 1 Oct 03 - 31 Dec 03	Qtr. 2 1 Jan 04 - 31 Mar 04	Qtr.3 1 Apr 04 - 30 Jun 04	Qtr.4 1 Jul 04 - 30 Sep 04	
Global Core Initiatives					
Complete GCI #1 research on SOs and major program priorities of missions in candidate countries.	20-Oct-03				Completed October 2003
Candidate missions contacted to assess their participation, nominate the organizations that they would like to see participate.	30-Nov-03				Completed November 2003
Nominated organizations name their representative(s), sign the letter of commitment, and complete the Advocacy Assessment.	15-Dec-03				Completed December 2003
First workshop conducted in Ghana. Participants (Advocacy Fellows) formulate Action Plans for next 4-5 months.		22-Feb-04			Completed February 2004. Update: Applicants will prepare Actions Plans for presentation at the Istanbul workshop
Second workshop in Istanbul, Turkey for Advocacy Fellows to refine Action Plans to be implemented during the remainder of this Initiative.			June 2004		Update: Planned for June 13-18, 2004
Planning GCI2--Strengthening Local Organizations and Improving Service Delivery through M & E				Sept 2004	Update: Beginning design and planning for the second Training Series
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE					
Service delivery strategy and protocols	31-Oct-03				Completed October 2003
Develop system for maintaining TA/Training via Portal			15-Apr		Currently under development
Organizational Assessments for GCI #1.		15-Mar-04			Ongoing. First Participating Organization, GAPVOD, completed IDF in February; remainder to be completed by October 2004

Individual TA packages started for participating organizations. Each of these packages continues through August 2005.		15-Mar-04			Update: TA will begin following Istanbul workshop as IDFs are completed
Review the IDF for possible enhancements for network use for GCI2 participants					Update: The present IDF will be used for GCI1 participants. Any refinements will be implemented for future participants. October 2004
NGOCONNECT.NET					
Software purchased and installed; training completed	31-Oct-03				Completed November 2003
CAP "brochure" for NGOCONNECT.NET completed	8-Dec-03				Completed December 2003
NGOCONNECT.NET utilities ready for Advocacy GCI#1	31-Dec-03				Completed February 2004
NGOCONNECT.NET utilities ready for IDF and Tech. Assistance		1-Mar-04			Completed February 2004
NGOCONNECT.NET utilities ready for Innovation Grants solicitation		1-Mar-04			Completed March 2004
PVC library or "Reading Room" space ready for testing			1-Apr-04		PVC directed Reading Room be removed; OD resources incorporated into appropriate parts of NGOC
NGOConnect.NET training for GCI1 participants			June 2004		Update: GCI1 participants will receive training on the use of NGOConnect.NET, emphasizing its use for their networks.
Launch of NGOConnect.NET within USAID				September 2004	Update: September 2004
INNOVATION GRANTS PROGRAM					
Grants management system finalized and program announced			1-May-04		Update: Systems finalized; APS expected to be released May 1, 2004
Proposal development TA completed					Update: TA will be available for the 6-month period during which the APS is open and applications are being received. November 04
First meeting of Grants Review Committee				August 04	Update: Application review beginning Aug (round 1) and Nov 2004 (round 2)

First round of grants awarded					Update: First award date is estimated to be October15, 2004
MONITORING AND EVALUATION					
Results Framework and PMP approved	31-Dec-03				Completed January 2004
Field-level M&E consultants identified			30-Apr-04		Consultants for GCI1 IDFs will all be identified in April
Create M&E protocols, and refine M & E database and PMP			30-Jun-04		Update: PMP will be revised as needed in line with the M &E tools used for data collection
PROJECT ADMINISTRATION					
Offices established, staff and admin/finance systems in place	22-Oct-03				Completed October 2003
CAP promotional strategy and messages created	31-Oct-03				Completed October 2003
First meeting of CAP Resource Organizations	14-Nov-03				Completed November 2003
Second meeting of CAP Resource Organizations			3-Jun-04		Update: June 2004
Create marketing plan				July 2004	Update: Craft a targeted marketing strategy
PROGRAM REPORTING					
Quarterly financial reports		31-Jan-04	30-Apr-04	31-Jul-04	Completed October 03; January 04; April 2004
Semi-annual report and implementation plan			30-Apr-04		Completed April 2004
Annual Performance Review					NA for year one
Annual Property/software Inventory					NA for year one

C.   Staffing Changes

As program operations got underway and staffing needs became clearer, CAP made some changes to the staffing structure. MSI added an additional full-time position to be located at AED: TA/Training and M/E Coordinator. This position was filled by Vicky Michener, who joined the CAP staff on January 2, 2004. To provide the necessary funding to cover this position, MSI's agreement with AED was revised. Two non-key Senior Technical Advisor positions (Bill Millsap and Jim Freer) were eliminated.

CAP Knowledge Management Specialist Cheryl Walniuk joined the program full time on December 1, 2004, relieving acting Knowledge Management Specialist Chris Shultz.

CAP Chief of Party, Barbara Howald, left the program to return to her former position at OFDA. Her last day was March 10, 2004. By March 31, AED had identified a replacement candidate, Barney Singer, for PVC's approval.

D. Grant Management Systems

CAP has put in place systems and has established internal procedures and documents needed for the proper implementation of the Innovation Grants for NGO Networks Program. These include procedures for the selection of program advertising method, the submission and review of applications, the award and monitoring of grants.

Grants Systems:

- The competitive procedure chosen to advertise the CAP Innovation Grants for NGO Networks program is the Annual Program Statement (APS). The APS will remain open for six months.
- CAP Resource Organizations will circulate the APS to network organizations in target USAID-assisted countries.
- AED will award Fixed-Obligation Grants (FOGs). Each grant must be completed within 12 months.
- In this first year of Innovation Grants, the CAP Team expects to award four to sic grants ranging from $10,000 to $30,000 each.
- Each applicant must contribute at least 15% of the total project costs as cost share.
- Applications and instructions for the CAP Innovation Grants for NGO Networks program may be downloaded at www.NGOConnect.NET/innovation.
- The entire grant process is described in detail on the website. The CAP team has developed a Manual that provides all necessary procedures, rules and regulations that applicants need to follow.
- Applications and other materials must be submitted through CAP's website at www.NGOConnect.NET/innovation. A private workroom will be set up on the website for each applicant organization, ensuring the confidentiality of all applications.
- CAP will conduct two rounds of reviews per APS cycle. All applications received by August 1, 2004 will be reviewed in the first round with an expected award date on or around October 15, 2004. If funds remain, applications received after August 1, 2004 will be reviewed on November 1, 2004 with an expected award date on or around January 15, 2005.
- There are two stages in the review process. Stage one is the initial application, applicants submit their concept paper and application documents, which are reviewed by the CAP team. Stage two is the final proposal. Applicants who have satisfactory initial applications will advance to stage two and be asked to submit more detailed proposals according to instructions given to them by CAP staff.

- A review committee is to be composed of four experts in networks, sustainability, organizational development and advocacy, who will review the final proposals and make their recommendations.
- Based on the recommendations from the review committee, CAP will present the finalists to USAID for concurrence.
- Once CAP has received concurrence from USAID to fund a project, the applicant will be notified and a Fixed Obligation Grant Agreement will be negotiated. The Grant Agreement will include the program description, approved budget for the grant, disbursement schedule, the reporting requirements, mandatory and optional standard provisions, and all other conditions. All reporting and contractual obligations will be explained to the sub-grantees.
- Reporting requirements will include project progress reports, financial reports, a final project report, and a final financial report.

E.   Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

The CAP M&E system is composed of two elements: a Results Framework (RF) and a Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP). During this reporting period, the RF was finalized and the PMP that was submitted with the original AED/MSI proposal was discussed with the PVC CTO and her team, and was revised. The revised PMP was shared with PVC as part of the Year One Implementation Plan.

During this reporting period CAP staff began to design data collection methods and the M&E database. CAP is designing internal monitoring systems to track changes in areas that do not necessarily appear in the PMP (like gender) and to measure processes and quality of services. For instance, a draft evaluation form for assessing the IDF workshops was developed and tested in Ghana. CAP is producing an internal M&E guide for staff use.

Prior to the first workshop in Accra, CAP engaged in extensive research and discussions about the best way to monitor GCI1 – advocacy capacity of networks – and determined that the most efficient approach is to measure GCI1 results in two ways: using the score from the IDF on the relevant rows, as well as information from the final reports from Participating Organizations (POs) about the key activities they undertook and the results achieved during the GCI1 period.

F.   Financial and Contractual Actions

During the reporting period, the CAP team has carried out methodical internal oversight of all program activities. The CAP Finance and Operations Manager ensured proper approval of expenditures, budget design, financial oversight and financial monitoring, allowing the CAP team to meet USAID contractual requirements, including financial deliverables (SF269) and program reporting.

In addition, the CAP team has worked closely with AED's Contracts Department to put in place key agreements. These include:

- The signature of the Leader with Associates Sub-Cooperative Agreement (Sub-CA No. MSI-1270-3253) with Management Systems International (MSI).
- The signature of the Leader with Associates Sub-Cooperative Agreement (Sub-CA No. AI-1270-3253) with Advocacy Institute (AI).
- The completion of two major purchase orders with Tomoye and Xcalibur, one for the purchase of Tomoye's content management software, Simplify 3.1, and the other for the hosting of NGOConnect.NET.

Finally, the CAP team submitted its proposal for the program's first Associate Award for the Ghana Advocacy Program, awarded on March 2, 2004. This entailed successful communication with USAID Mission in Accra, budget design and contract administration.

G. Resource Organizations

The first meeting of CAP Resource Organizations was held on November 14, 2003. Twelve of the 14 Resource Organizations were represented, and participated actively in the discussion. Following a brief presentation by each organization, CAP staff provided a detailed overview of the program, describing both the activities to be undertaken through the Leader Award and the potential for Associate Awards from any USAID operating unit. The issue of marketing CAP services was thoroughly explored, and participants suggested that each Resource Organization transmit a list of the countries in which they are currently working, as well as those in which they have strong interest. (Subsequently, the majority of the organizations present did send this information to CAP, and staff created a matrix which can be sorted either by country or organization.)

Participants also suggested that such Resource Organization gatherings be held semi-annually. The second meeting is scheduled for June.

III. Major Programmatic Activities

The following is a summary of the main programmatic activities undertaken by CAP during the period under review, with notations of updated activities planned for the remainder of the year.

A. Global Core Initiative (GCI) 1: Advocacy Fellows Program

This 18-month activity is being conducted under the Leader Award with core funds. It is the first of three such GCIs. As proposed, GCI #1 is being carried out by a CAP Resource Organization, The Advocacy Institute, through a sub-agreement with AED. This initiative includes two, one-week workshops, with technical assistance provided by AI for the duration of the program. The first week-long workshop took place in Accra, Ghana from 22 to 27 February.

Prior to the workshop, CAP personnel participated in planning meetings with AI staff. These sessions were devoted to discussing the topics to be treated, logistical arrangements, and monitoring program performance.

In October/early November, desk research of Mission portfolios was conducted by CAP staff to identify those countries meeting certain criteria and having relevant strategic objectives. This produced a short list of candidate countries in each region. Using this list, in early to mid-November, meetings were convened by the CAP CTO with each Regional Bureau to request their advice and counsel on country selection and appropriate contacts within priority Missions. On November 19, 2003, an Agency-wide cable was sent out by the CAP CTO to announce GCI #1 and solicit expressions of interest from Missions. Based on suggestions provided by Regional Bureaus, responses to the CTO's cable and existing personal contacts, e-mails were sent to candidate Missions with information about CAP and a Fact Sheet on the Advocacy Fellows Program.

This process resulted in the selection of organizations from 15 countries, comprising a broad and unique mix of cultures and experience: Albania, Bulgaria, Georgia, Ghana, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Lebanon, Mongolia, Paraguay, Peru, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Tajikistan, and Zambia. In two cases (Ghana and Sudan), Missions provided Associate Awards to support the participation of a second NGO representative from their countries. (See section E. for a discussion of Associate Awards.) CAP will provide all Missions with general overviews of progress through periodic messages, and through NGOConnect.Net, in which they will all be subscribed.

Once Missions nominated organizations and provided contact information, the CAP staff communicated directly with those organizations, sending an "Expression of Interest" form to be completed and returned as quickly as possible. The Advocacy Institute followed up by administering a Needs Assessment questionnaire and making logistical arrangements for the workshop.

In addition to staff from the Advocacy Institute (Sharvell Becton, Nader Tadros, Justin Siuta, and Laura Wyshynski), CAP Program Director, Barbara Howald, attended the workshop to introduce participants to the CAP program and train them in the use of NGOConnect.NET. Mark Renzi, Senior CAP Technical Advisor, also traveled to Accra for pre-workshop activities with the local organization selected to participate, and to deliver a session during the workshop on the Institutional Development Framework (IDF), which is to be used with all participating organizations to measure changes in their institutional capacity (discussed below in the section on Technical Assistance in Organizational Development).

During the workshop, participants presented the Case Stories they had written before traveling to Accra. These experiences with efforts related to advocacy served both to stimulate ideas and to strengthen relationships within the group. Participant evaluations confirmed that the workshop was extremely effective in terms of initiating a community

of advocacy practitioners and in distinguishing and utilizing advocacy concepts and elements.

Noted as an update on the Implementation Plan (Table 1), the final week-long workshop is set for June 13-18 in Istanbul, Turkey. Prior to the June workshop, Participating Organizations are to draft Action Plans for the remaining 14 months of the program, and to discuss them with the group. Once finalized, those plans will be used as a measure of further progress and will be monitored over the remaining period of the program.

Design and planning for the second global core initiative, Strengthening Local Organizations and Improving Service Delivery through M&E, will begin in September 2004.

B.   Technical Assistance in Organizational Development

CAP is to provide direct technical assistance to GCI#1 participating organizations in organizational development. This component of the program will be getting underway as the application of the Institutional Development Framework (IDF) is completed in each participating organization.

Technical Assistance designed to achieve organizational development will be based on the priority needs of participating organizations, as a result of the application of the IDF. The initial application of the IDF also will serve to set baseline, against which changes in organizational capacity can be tracked and PMP indicator data can be collected.

As noted above, Mark Renzi traveled to Accra in advance of the Advocacy workshop in order to facilitate the application of the IDF within GAPVOD, the local NGO network that had been nominated by that Mission for participation in the GCI1program.

The IDF application was very successful and resulted in GAPVOD identifying three priority areas for strengthening:

1. Improving the effectiveness of the Board;
2. Improving services to members and increasing member participation in GAPVOD; and
3. Improving fundraising and financial management.

During the first advocacy workshop, the GCI participants heard about the IDF experience directly from GAPVOD, which generated great interest. During the workshop, Mark also interviewed each participant and developed a preliminary implementation scheme for the IDF for their organizations. This entails the on-site facilitation by experienced specialists of the IDF within each organization as soon as feasible.

Plans are now underway with all other participating organizations for the application of the IDF within their networks. Noted as an update on the Implementation Plan, all IDF applications are expected to be complete by October 2004.

C.   NGOConnect.NET

CAP Knowledge Management Specialist, Cheryl Walniuk, began work on December 1, 2003. CAP staff have met numerous times to discuss the design of the portal and the potential ways to make use of NGOConnect.NET. CAP staff have taken responsibility to be *editors* for the various sections of the website and have also begun to contribute resources to NGOConnect.

Achievements related to NGOConnect.NET during this reporting period include:

- Basic design of the portal, including graphics and customization of layout
- Creation of the Advocacy Fellows Workroom in preparation for the February workshop. Among the features of this section are:
    - Private workspaces for each Participant Organization
    - Institutional Development Framework (IDF) workrooms
    - Private and group discussion forums
    - Email lists
    - Case stories
    - Photo album from the Ghana workshop
    - Action plan assignments
    - Information for the upcoming workshop in Turkey
- Established a newsletter for Advocacy Fellows
- Began training of NGOConnect community leaders/section editors
- Fifty-one members added to site (18 of these are Advocacy Fellows)
- Addition of more than 400 resources

The Advocacy Fellows section of the portal was operational in time for the Advocacy Fellows Program workshop in Ghana.

Noted as updates on the Implementation Plan, representatives from Participating Organizations will be trained as NGOConnect.NET editors during the June workshop in Istanbul, and a formal launch of the site will be planned for September 2004.

D.   Innovation Grants

CAP team members carried out numerous brainstorming sessions concerning the purpose, criteria, process, award and operation of the innovation grants program.

It was decided that the goal of the CAP Innovation Grants for NGO Networks program is to support the sustainable development of NGO networks in target USAID-assisted countries. This program helps local NGO networks, Intermediary Support Organizations (ISOs), coalitions, or any other local NGO support mechanism that links, coordinates, or facilitates the activities of otherwise autonomous organizations, to improve what they do as networks. The grants also support NGOs who wish to form new networks.

CAP staff have been conducting research into the nature of networks and how they function in preparation for this component of the program. USAID priorities in terms of the types of countries to be assisted were also studied. This information will be used to target these grants to NGO networks in the most propitious locations.

Additional details about the grants program are discussed above in section D., Grants Management System. Noted as updates on the Implementation Plan, the release date for the APS is scheduled to be May 1, 2004. The APS will remain upen for the required 6-month period until November 1, 2004. Dates for receipt and review of proposals have been adjusted to correspond to these changes.

E.   Associate Awards

During this reporting period, two associate awards have been negotiated, and one of them has been signed.

USAID/Ghana made an associate award to CAP to cover the participation of an additional organization in GCI1. Thus, a representative of the Legal Resources Center attended the first workshop in Accra, and LRC will be a full participant in the advocacy program.

Although the agreement has not been finalized, USAID/Sudan also provided an Associate Award to support the participation in the advocacy program of a second representative of the NGO network identified by the Mission.

During this reporting period, marketing brochures were created and distributed. Resource Organizations were asked to market CAP and relationships with USAID Missions and Bureaus have been established.

CAP's initial contact with Missions offered them an opportunity to nominate for GCI #1 NGO networks they are interested in strengthening. Thus, a solid platform for on-going communication has been established. Missions have stated their interest in learning about the progress of the organizations they nominated, and will be kept abreast of developments both by CAP and by those organizations. In essence, in addition to direct contact, those organizations represent a cadre of "surrogate communicators" in touch with Missions in participating countries. It is highly likely that those communicators will share their opinions and reactions with Mission personnel during the 18 months of the program and perhaps beyond. This will enhance CAP's visibility and, assuming quality results, could lead to requests for our assistance with the Mission's own programming.

Noted as an update on the Implementation Plan, CAP will develop a targeted marketing plan in June/July 2004.

IV. Results Achieved

This has been a start-up period for the CAP program and substantial progress has been made at getting systems into place and implementing program activities. Overall programmatic results have not yet been realized.

V. Lessons Learned

CGI country selection and relations with USAID operating units

- The Agency-wide cable from CAP's CTO asking missions to nominate organizations to participate in GCI #1 not only served to create greater awareness of CAP, but also resulted in expressions of interest from a number of countries across all regions.   In some cases, Washington-based desk officers sent messages to all missions within their regions, which generated considerable interest. In other cases, CAP made direct contact with Missions that had been vetted by the Bureau or where personal contacts had already been established. This was also successful. In one case, the Bureau representative preferred to contact only the missions in the region viewed as appropriate, referring to CAP only those that replied in the affirmative. This indirect method of vetting and communicating proved to be the least effective approach, and produced the smallest number of candidates for the advocacy program.

- Because Bureau representatives and other Agency personnel tend at the outset to associate CAP with DG objectives, it is important to explain immediately and to underscore that we seek to strengthen the capacity of NGOs in all sectors. Our experience with identifying Missions interested in CGI #1 makes it clear that the engagement of Program Officers, who know the overall Mission portfolio, rather than only that of DG Officers, produces the best results. In fact, some Program Officers used our invitation to nominate participants as an opportunity to build synergy and greater communication among the various SO teams within their missions.

- It is not necessary for CAP staff to conduct desk research to identify candidate Missions prior to discussions with Regional Bureaus and others. The short lists compiled for GCI #1 were not needed for those discussions; bureau representatives either had their own priorities or wanted to offer the opportunity to all Missions in their regions.

- The fact that Missions were assured that nominations of organizations for participation in GCI #1 represented no management burden or funding requirement was key to their positive response.

NGOConnect.Net

- Activities and items can be designed to draw members back to the site on a regular basis. An example would be the photo album from the Advocacy Workshop -- almost all of the participants logged on to view it and many accessed other information or posted to a discussion board during that visit. The newsletter had a similar effect.

NGOConnect.NET
SCREENSHOTS

Left column, from top: Main Index
Advocacy Fellows Program Workshop photo album
Sample from a recent discussion board

Right column, from top: Advocacy Fellows index
Sample resources page

ADVOCACY INSTITUTE
ACADEMY FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS INTERNATIONAL

CAPABLE PARTNERS (CAP) ADVOCACY FELLOWS PROGRAM
22 – 27 FEBRUARY 2004
ACCRA, GHANA

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ADVOCACY INSTITUTE

MAKING SOCIAL JUSTICE LEADERSHIP STRATEGIC, EFFECTIVE, AND SUSTAINABLE

NEEDS ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Current Contact Information
Name:
Organization:
Network:
Email:
Address:
Telephone (*where you can be reached*):
Fax:
Web Site Address:

Questions
Note: Please provide brief *(5-7 sentences)* answers to these open-ended questions.

1) You best describe the nature of your organization as: (*please mark all that apply*)
   a) A network of NGOs with a common goal
   b) An intermediary support organization (ISO)

2) Has your organization/network been doing (or is somehow involved in) advocacy work on an issue(s) in your home country/region? If yes, please describe this work briefly.

3) What is the field(s) of work of your organization? How are you related to the advocacy work of your organization?

4) How do you currently define advocacy for your issue (or in general)?

5) What have been your most useful sources of information for your advocacy efforts? (*books, e-newsletters, specific websites, talking to people with advocacy experience, trial and error, …*).

6) Please briefly describe your involvement in (*or observation of*) one advocacy activity that demonstrates your commitment to achieving social justice. What gave you the most satisfaction? What was your greatest challenge?

7) As a member of a network, what has been your biggest reward/challenge in the work of this network?

8) The Fellows Program will provide you with an opportunity to spend significant time with other Fellows as well as with colleagues from the Advocacy Institute. Please tell us three outcomes you hope to see result from this Program.

9) What can you contribute to the workshop (e.g. cultural, intellectual, song, and poetry, etc.)?

10) How are you planning to make use of the learning experience you are going to have with your colleagues? Please be specific.

Thank you very much for your time and we look forward to meeting you in February!

ADVOCACY INSTITUTE

MAKING SOCIAL JUSTICE LEADERSHIP STRATEGIC, EFFECTIVE, AND SUSTAINABLE

PREPARING CASE STORIES

We have found case stories to be a useful way of understanding the elements of advocacy. They will help us and you appreciate what works and what doesn't work in your own work situation. You will probably be surprised at the amount of experience and analysis that you will demonstrate in the process of writing your own advocacy story. The case stories will also increase our knowledge of your advocacy experience and enable us to both draw on this experience in the program, and plan our program sessions more completely around your experience and work situation. Case stories can be used for group discussion of the elements of advocacy.

You will notice that we refer to it as a case story and not a case study. Case stories are part of story telling and have lasting power. It is not meant to be academic in nature, but a means to reflect on and share our own experience with one another.

Case stories can accomplish several goals:
1. Learn from your own experience and how you do advocacy in your own communities.
2. Strengthen community -- in organizations and among people engaged in justice struggles.
3. Inspire action.
4. Transmit advocacy skills.
5. Develop issue perspectives.
6. Test advocacy models.

Again, keep in mind that your case story is an advocacy tool. It is not intended to be an academic study or to give a complete history. It is meant to be truthful. It should illustrate the possibilities and barriers facing the changes sought by your organization.

Your case story should describe what the effort was designed to change or what it opposed. Stopping something harmful from happening can be a powerful result of advocacy. Nevertheless, it does not have to be a complete story. You can describe a struggle that you are currently involved in and how innovatively you are working on changing a difficult situation.

Think of stories that help people who are not "expert" on the issue to feel the excitement, frustration, joy and pain of advocacy and citizen engagement.

There are no secrets to guard. Events can be described without naming the participants. Mistakes are made and should be acknowledged. We can learn a lot from them. Successes, no

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matter how small, should also be recognized and celebrated. We also learn much from them. Here is a suggested outline for preparing a 4-6 page (double-spaced) case story of an advocacy campaign in which you and your organization participated or are currently involved:

I.   Purpose of the advocacy campaign, including a brief description of the issue you are struggling for (2-3 paragraphs)

II.   Objectives of the campaign (up to 2 pages)

    A. Organizational/community

    B. Policy

    C. Political

III.   Strategic and tactical approaches (up to 3 pages). You can choose from among the following areas to describe the major focus of your campaign:

    A. Building a constituency (a popular base) around the issue

    B. Building a coalition

    C. Influencing elected and appointed officials

    D. Preparing and disseminating information

    E. Communicating to:

    F. Special, targeted audiences

    G. General public

    H. Attracting and sustaining media attention

    I. Using symbols -- culture, humor, ridicule and shame -- to further your goals

    J. Litigation

    K. Confrontation by using tactics such as demonstrations, strikes, and sit-ins.

    L. Other (please explain)

IV.   While talking about these strategies, do not forget to describe some of the high moments and turning points for the people struggling for the issue.

V.   Lessons Learned and conclusions (also in a simple storytelling-like style)

ADVOCACY INSTITUTE
ACADEMY FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS INTERNATIONAL

CAPABLE PARTNERS (CAP) ADVOCACY FELLOWS PROGRAM
22 – 27 FEBRUARY 2004
ACCRA, GHANA

A G E N D A

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of the five-day program, participants will:

1) Become familiar with the Capable Partners (CAP) Program core funded activities.
2) Begin to establish a community of advocacy practitioners.
3) Distinguish and utilize advocacy concepts and elements.
4) Learn and practice the application of key advocacy analytical tools.
5) Be introduced to the Institutional Development Framework and technical assistance components.
6) Commit to develop an advocacy plan for presentation at the June program.

Sunday, 22 February

16:00-18:45   **Opening Session**
Facilitators: Sharvell Becton, Barbara Howald, Mark Renzi and Nader Tadros

This session will begin the process of learning about one another, personally and professionally, and will include an orientation into the Capable Partners (CAP) Program core funded activities, and a review of the agenda for the week.

18:45   **Adjourn**

Monday, 23 February

8:30   **Opening Session**
Facilitators: Sharvell Becton and Nader Tadros

Call for Culture Share; Welcome colleagues into the group; Introduction of Daily Management Teams

9:00 **What Is Advocacy?**
Facilitators: Sharvell Becton and Nader Tadros

Based on information from the Fellows' needs assessments and case stories, we will explore what advocacy means and its scope in the context of the Fellows' experience. We will also examine the Advocacy Institute's working definition of advocacy.

10:45 **Break**

11:15 **NGOCONNECT.NET – Your On-Line Source**
Facilitator: Barbara Howald

Fellows will be learn about this integral part of the CAP Program that will be used to facilitate communication, disseminate new information enable the organizational development technical assistance to move forward, and keep participants connected to Program staff and one another.

13:00 **Buffet Lunch**

14:30 **Institutional Development Framework**
Facilitator: Mark Renzi

A customized technical assistance tool to help organizations increase productivity, enhance impact, and add to sustainability will be introduced and discussed.

16:30 **Wrap Up**
Facilitator: Sharvell Becton

17:00 **Adjourn**

Tuesday, 24 February

8:30 **Opener and Daily Review**
Facilitators: Sharvell Becton and Daily Management Teams

Call for Culture Share
Review of the previous day

9:00 **Demystifying Power and Politics**
Facilitators: Nader Tadros and Sharvell Becton

This session will surface the types and faces of power relationships, explore how power and politics is described and thought about, and the role they play in our work and lives.

10:15 **Break**

10:30	**Demystifying Power and Politics (cont'd)**

12:00 noon	**Buffet Lunch**

13:00   **Advocacy Strategic Planning - An Overview and Tools**
Facilitators: Sharvell Becton and Nader Tadros

Fellows will discuss advocacy strategic planning as a dynamic process, learn about and practice three advocacy strategy planning tools.

15:00   **Break**

15:30   **Advocacy Strategic Planning - An Overview and Tools (cont'd)**

17:15   **Wrap Up**
Facilitator: Nader Tadros

17:30   **Adjourn**

Wednesday, 25 February

8:30   **Opener and Daily Review**
Facilitators: Sharvell Becton and Daily Management Teams

Call for Culture Share
Review of the previous day

9:00   **Constituency Building – A Core Strategy**
Facilitator: Nader Tadros

This session will focus on broadening the definition of constituent and strategies to build peoples' participation.

10:30   **Break**

10:45   **Coalition Building**
Facilitator: Sharvell Becton

Based on the knowledge and experience of the Fellows, we will discuss the different types of collaborative relationships, and explore the benefits and challenges of working in coalition.

13:00   **Break**

13:15   **Mid-Program Check-in**
Facilitators: Sharvell Becton and Nader Tadros

13:45   **Wrap Up**
Facilitator: Sharvell Becton

14:00 **Adjourn and Buffet Lunch**

Thursday, 26 February

8:30 **Opener and Daily Review**
Facilitators: Nader Tadros and Daily Management Teams

Call for Culture Share
Review of the previous day

9:00 **Prep for Site Visit to Integrated Social Development Centre (ISODEC)**

9:20 **Leave for Site Visit to ISODEC**

9:50 **Arrive at ISODEC**

11:30 **Leave to Return to La Palm Hotel and Break**

12:00 noon **Site Visit Debrief**
Facilitator: Nader Tadros

12:45 **Media Advocacy**
Facilitator: Sharvell Becton

This session will focus on a working definition of media advocacy, and framing for content and framing for access.

13:30 **Buffet Lunch**

14:30 **Strengthening Our Networks: CAP Program Resource Consultations**

Fellows will have an opportunity to engage in individual and small group conversations with facilitators and staff about the Institutional Development Framework, NGOCONNECT, and expectations for the June Program.

17:00 **Wrap Up**
Facilitator: Nader Tadros

17:00 **Adjourn**

19:00 **Group Farewell Dinner**

On our last evening together, we will gather for a festive farewell dinner.

Friday, 27 February

10:00	**Opener and Daily Review**
	Facilitators: Sharvell Becton and Daily Management Teams
	Call for Culture Share
	Review of the previous day
10:30	**Where Do We Go From Here?**
	Facilitators: Barbara Howald and Nader Tadros
	Program timelines and core components will be reviewed.
11:00	**Evaluation**
	Facilitators: Sharvell Becton and Nader Tadros
	Fellows will have an opportunity to give oral and written feedback on the week-long Program.
12:00 noon	**Wrap Up**
	Facilitator: Sharvell Becton and Nader Tadros
13:00	**Adjourn and Buffet Lunch**

Note: A continental breakfast and a buffet lunch are included each day with the Program. Dinners are on your own (hotel credit provided) _except_ the Group Farewell Dinner on Thursday, 26 February.

Summary of Evaluations

Total Questionnaires returned: **18**

1.   **Please rate how effective the Advocacy Fellows Program was in meeting the following objectives:**

   a) Become familiar with the Capable Partners (CAP) Program core funded activities.

   1 = not effective at all; 5 = very effective

Not effective at all	Slightly Effective	Effective	Very Effective	Extremely Effective
-	-	4	6	8

Comments:

- I have some knowledge of this but wouldn't say I have every information or knowledge.
- The core-funded activities have been better understood. This program hits right at the heart of the prescription that is needed to build an effective civil society in third world countries.
- Taking an adventure is not an easy job. So there is a need to get to familiar with the program first.
- The distinction between the three components of CAP was relatively clear. E-phases should have been put on their link and complementarities.
- Yes, participants have become familiar with the Capable Partners (CAP) Program core funded activities. (2 times)
- I will read again the file about CAP Program. If I have any questions I will ask the Advocacy Institute.

   b) Begin to establish a community of advocacy practitioners.

   1 = not effective at all; 5 = very effective

Not effective at all	Slightly Effective	Effective	Very Effective	Extremely Effective
-	-	2	9	7

Comments:

Team Interaction and Participation:
- We had useful opportunities to get to build relationships. Structures have been put into place to sustain those relationships and facilitate the continued sharing of experiences.
- Team also linked together after working hours.
- Hats off to the organizers for their planning and choice of participants. The details about natural flags, placing of the world map and interactive sessions have been noted and appreciated, particularly in this context.
- The interaction between all participants was very fruitful. (3 times)
- I think that future steps to strengthen this community should be undertaken.

NGOCONNECT:
- The idea itself is good, but did you think about the sustainability of it? Similar to NGOConnect.net? What happens in 18 months times? What happens afterwards?
- The NGO Connect bit in my view can help achieve this (a community of advocacy practitioners).

Other:
- It is very important to have an international community whose work is thoroughly on advocacy issues.
- Participants have now established a community of advocacy practitioners.
- I hope after this training, the participants will share about advocacy action plan.

   c) Distinguish and utilized advocacy concepts and elements.

1 = not effective at all; 5 = very effective

Not effective at all	Slightly Effective	Effective	Very Effective	Extremely Effective
-	-	3	7	8

Comments:

- Yes, I think I can handle this.
- Most of the discussion of the concepts was quite simplistic thought they covered the core meanings of the concepts.
- This was quite effective. One needs to go over the material as it was quite new and a lot was covered in a short period of time.
- It is just a beginning and as we leave to our respective places is when we will distinguish and utilize the concepts. (2 times)
- The concepts should have been analyzed and evaluated a bit further through group discussion for instance.

- Participants are now able to distinguish and utilize advocacy concepts and elements.
- How I know the "decision maker" is not necessarily the decision maker.
- I did not join the session, but I will learn from the papers and materials.

d) Learn and practice the application of key advocacy analytical tools.

1 = not effective at all; 5 = very effective

Not effective at all	Slightly Effective	Effective	Very Effective	Extremely Effective
-	-	5	8	5

Comments:
- I have some confidence in the application of this.
- The games etc. were helpful in doing so. (2 times)
- Only one example on corruption was used. I would have suggested several or probably using one tool per day during the culture share.
- Very well presented within the time frame.
- This is a process that needs time to be realized.
- A missing component was the evaluation part of every advocacy campaign and action.
- From now on, the participants will be able to practice the application of key advocacy analytical tools.
- Need to learn more.

e) Be introduced to the Institutional Development Framework and technical assistance components.

1 = not effective at all; 5 = very effective

Not effective at all	Slightly Effective	Effective	Very Effective	Extremely Effective
-	-	3	9	6

Comments:

- I think I have a clear understanding of this and how to develop a proposal to address the inadequacies in my organization.
- Enables us to see clearly where, in terms of institutional development, we stand (our organization).
- Went through the presentation quickly but fortunately the designed group work reinforced the presentation. Kofi's group was not adequately prepared for their role.

- The introduction was very comprehensive. I think that more time should have been provided for participants to meet and discuss their individual views. We were meeting in the breaks and I think we should have had at least half an hour each to discuss.
- Very important issue, it should take more than two hours.
- The objective is very relevant. However, it was a lot of new thoughts to assimilate in a short time. Perhaps, it may also be due to my own mindset about graphs, etc. that I did not quite get all of it the first time around. The presenter was however at pains to point out that more will be learned on application.
- This is an effective procedure because it involves long term planning and implementation of the program.
- The participants have been properly introduced to the institutional development framework and technical assistance components.
- I had the privilege of going though the IDF with my colleagues at my workplace. We were able to "pop up the hood" in my organization and I am grateful.
- Mark had to explain it to me. I will read the files again and ask if I have a question.
- This was quite good.

2.   **Describe one or two ways you plan to apply what you learned at this Advocacy Fellows Program.**

Comments:

- Our advocacy work in a Framework for Partnership with Government is still on going and I plan on applying what has been learned in the Program to move the process forward and possibly to its conclusion. New advocacy initiatives on other causes will also be developed.
- Conduct a training session/ workshop for unit leaders engaged in advocacy on reproductive health.
- I'll organize a meeting within my network, and give information about what is "advocacy", how it is used. How to hold the CAP program or workshop. Then we'll discuss how we'll develop Adv. Ins. works in our network.
- I am using the framework to guide me in piloting advocacy and toward human rights training program targeted at civic unions in three regions of Ghana. I would begin/ continue to work with staff of my organization to develop its institutional capacity and infuse the advocacy strategy in our future work.
- Using our strategic plan and work plan with any team identify key advocacy issues. From this develop a strategy following one of the tools. From my/ our work annual work plan and budget reserve funds for implementation of following activities, which will result from the IDF.
- I plan to train my staff. I will try to find a way to pass this experience to other NGOs. I plan to use advocacy tools where developing our projects to use them to achieve our goals.

- Building and strengthening the network taking new approaches learned from our Advocacy work.
- We are still carrying out an advocacy program for having a new law for the protection of victims of trafficking. I guess I'll be more aware of the obstacles along the way the campaign will be better address to decision makers and takers.
- I plan to design a strong coalition in my country to reform our systems in order to change the educational modes.
- Presentation to the board of directors of my institution. Analyze the IDF with constituents.
- By having a session with the executive committee of ARCC. This will also include representatives from all network chambers. By organizing sessions with all regional chambers in their respective regions and help them prepare an action plan.
- Call for a one day Advocacy session to explain the role an advocacy group can play in upgrading the civil society community. Be open to share with individual advocacy group who wish to learn/ consult me as a person.
- In future advocacy campaigns and/ or actions, the analytical tools/ methods provided by this workshop are certainly going to help me and my colleagues in my organization better plan our campaign and identify the better ways to reach our goals/ targets.
- Conduct a workshop or workshops. Disseminate the advocacy concepts to the members of our network/ organization and participants of the workshop(s).
- I plan to transfer the knowledge acquires to staff members of my organization and member organizations through training.
- Try to strengthen the coalition with my network (with other NGOs in my issues and human rights in common). Sharing my knowledge to my organization and network.
- Develop an IDF plan, so that it benefits my network, as well as individuals, who will be trained to provide such as a TA in the future.

3.   What was the most useful aspect of this Advocacy Fellows Program?

Comments:

Cooperative Learning:
- The sharing of experiences from different parts of NGOs, network and coalitions. (4 times)
- It would have been recommended to "share" our case stories in a plenary sense so that the entire group benefits from their learnings.
- Group discussions.

Tools:
- Application of the key advocacy analytical tools.
- Learning the tools and sharing of experiences. (2 times)
- Learning some analytical tools and advocacy in general.
- Discussion and presentation on strategic planning tools.

Other:
- For me, the most useful aspect of the program was learning about demystifying power and politics.
- Everything was useful; everything was almost new for me. If you're asking most useful aspect, it is NGO Connect. NET and IDF.
- To get me to rethink my own advocacy practices.
- Importance of building/ identifying ones allies and opponents and building a strong coalition.
- It strengthens the capacity of the participants to deal with advocacy tools and at the same time strengthens the capacity of the relevant organization to achieve more effectively its strategic goals.
- To learn the scientific principles of Advocacy planning and building strategies for advocacy work.
- Examples given from the CAP team.
- Advocacy strategic planning/ constituency building and IDF.
- Appreciating that NGOs and a strong civil society can make a positive contribution to good governance of local and national governments.
- "What is Advocacy" and "Advocacy Strategic Planning".
- Meet with other NGOs from some country and will increase the international network
- A chance to learn experiences of different countries and cultures, and the variety of issues, which can exist.

4.   What was the least useful aspect of the Advocacy Fellows Program?

Comments:

Curriculum:
- I think the least useful aspect of this advocacy fellows program was the methodology in strategic planning.
- The least to me was the cultural aspects of it.
- Add knowledge about advocacy.

None:
- I am not sure there was any aspect of the program that was least useful. (4 times)
- Since the components were coherent and well interconnected, I do not think there was something to be called "less useful".

Other:
- Demystifying power and politics (too long). NGO Connect (less time) and it should have been at the end of the Program.
- Too rigid agenda- too much time was devoted to the fundamental elements of advocacy which are quite familiar to the Fellows. Less time was given to discussions of real cases.

5.   Facilitation is an important part of the Advocacy Fellow Program. Please provide your detailed comments and suggestions for the facilitators regarding their styles, methodologies, etc.

Comments:

Satisfactory:
- I was very comfortable with the facilitation. Even though facilitators were obviously at home with their subjects they had respect for the issue of participants even if there was a disagreement.
- The workshop was well managed and facilitated. (6 times)
- Everything was done in a high level. . . Well done!

Strengths:
- They complement each other very effectively. Excellent time managers.   Transition from one phase of the program to the other smoothly.
- Methodology was distinguished by the application of diverse approach that made workshop interesting, enriched and accessible
- Well thought out.
- I feel facilitation by the facilitators from Advocacy group was very participatory and they have drawn from useful examples to justify what they have said theoretically. (2 times)
- I found the styles quite applicable to the objectives of the individual topics.
- There was mutual respect and tolerance for all. (2 times)
- Facilitators were polite and appeared versed in the art of "gentle persuasion".
- The facilitators used good styles, methodologies, etc. in the facilitation of the workshop. I think every participant has fully enjoyed the workshop facilitation.
- Participants felt at ease and could comment whenever they wanted to. (2 times)

Weakness/ Needs Improvement:
- If possible, the facilitators should talk as slowly and clearly as possible.
- Some of the facilitators should be more flexible when they get answers for the presentations they do. Either you provide directly solutions or if you open a debate you have to follow the stream of it in order to assure more participation. Socratic way of teaching is good but should be handled with flexibility.
- Facilitation was good but needs to be updated as follows: Advocacy session should not be mixed with other topics that are not relevant to it; IDF be given its own schedule as institution work is usually very broad; and NGO Connect being a new technology need more time.
- However you've been too attached to the agenda and timing for each topic. During these five days, there were cases when we got really involved in the conversation. However, it

was stopped when the time was up. More attention should be paid to the mood of the audience.
- Concepts and principles were sometimes presented rapidly and in a "light" way. More analysis would be appreciated at the next event. Try to include the "cultural dimension" in their evaluation of concepts and methods.

Other:
- Excellent work on the logistics part.
- They did their job very well but it could have been excellent if some guide ideas could have been organized before sessions, for example: site visit. Also, the agenda was overcharged during the first two days, it could be more balanced. I liked that they were very respectful of every participant's participation.
- Each session had a different methodology. It was hard to predict what the next activity could be.
- It was refreshing and creative to change the sitting arrangements.
- Facilitation was good, but I think there was too much group work. Just when I began to enjoy the lecture, we had to break up into groups.
- Hope you could provide more input, materials and references through NGO Connect.

6.   Are there any additional comments or suggestions you would like to share?

Comments:

Site and Logistics:

- Per Diem assigned only within hotel premises should be reevaluated if possible. (3 times)
- Please send to us any new tools, papers and articles, which are related to June's program as early as possible. Please choose suitable country for second program, which is easy to get a visa, vaccinations, etc.

Thanks and Appreciation:
- I am happy and grateful I had the opportunity to participate in this program and I look forward to the June Program when we will have an opportunity to report on what this experience has been used for.
- Hotel accommodation was excellent. Coordination of logistics was excellent. Special thanks to Justin for prompt response to our emails and for advise/ instructions on logistics. Big thank you to all Advocacy Staff. I appreciate your effort very much.
- I would like to thank CAP for the support they give us.
- Thanks to the US tax payer and government, the USAID, AI, AED and MSI for making this happen.

- I hope this program will achieve the objective and expected results. Thanks very much for everything: Sharvell, Nader, Laura, Justin, Barbara, and Mark.

Other:
- It would have been good to have short presentations of the participants' experiences and using these as strong resources during the presentation/ discussions.
- It is a useful learning.
- The whole process is new to me and I have certainly learned a lot. Keep trying to make a difference in the lives of the disadvantaged.
- More having been said but as a practitioners body let us build around the common goal of plan/ program and try more to be inclusive of other countries not yet included.
- Please share the draft agenda for the next workshop and insist on feedback.

Report on GAPVOD (Ghana Association of Private Voluntary Organizations in Development) Institutional Self Assessment Process

February 2004

Summary findings and conclusions:

GAPVOD is full of contradictions: it is an organization with an important mandate, a long history, dedicated staff – and a very uncertain future. While it boasts 394 members, only 76 pay their dues. While GAPVOD is recognized by most in Ghana and internationally as the voice for the NGO sector in Ghana, many members gripe about lack of services from GAPVOD and harbor unrealistic expectations for how GAPVOD can help their organizations, almost to the point of "making rain fall on their fields." GAPVOD is the central player in the country's NGO reform movement and the voice for NGOs in the Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy Program, but hasn't had sufficient funds to pay its rent in the last two years. There is clearly an important role for GAPVOD to play, but to succeed it must strengthen its ties to its members, improve its financial situation, and truly become the representative of NGOs in Ghana.

A summary of the Institutional Development Profile (*Annex C*), is presented below, by resource area:

GAPVOD Score, by Resource Area
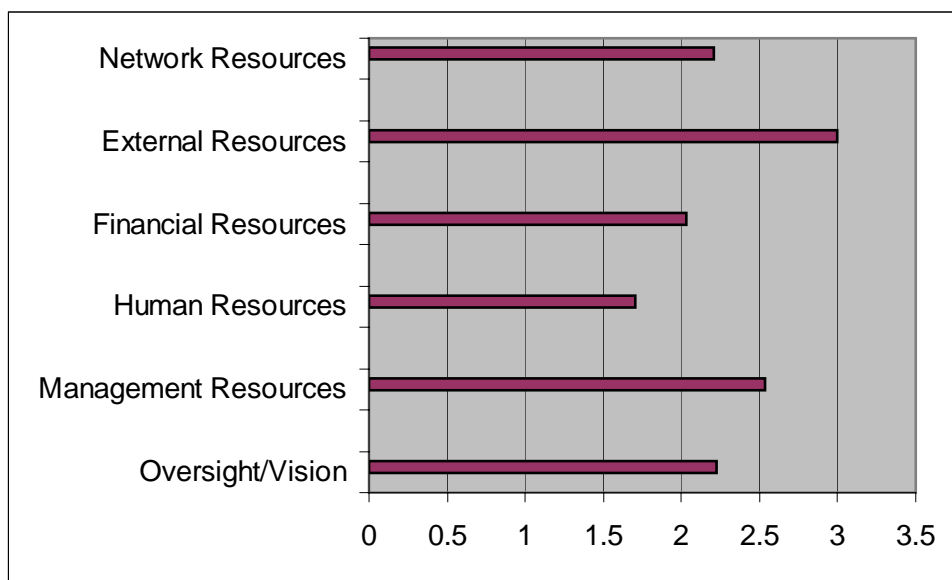
What emerges from the above is a "picture" of a once highly functioning organization that has fallen on hard times. As would be expected, GAPVOD is relatively strong in interacting in the larger political world and in working through a network – given its 24 years of experience. It also has managed to retain some competencies in management systems, again based on experience.

However, in the years since its initial "full ride" UNDP funding has ended, the organization appears to have drifted from its mission and membership base. Its board is less effective than it could be in representing the interests of the constituent NGOs and in the match of its technical skills with those most needed to advance GAPVOD (low score in "oversight/vision"); it is on the verge of financial collapse (low "financial resources") and is unable to pay for an adequate staff.

GAPVOD needs to build on its considerable strengths to "reinvent" itself, in its own mind, in the perceptions of its members, and its relationship to the larger society. The group agreed that this could only be done by simultaneous attention on three fronts: improving governance of GAPVOD by strengthening its board, by dramatically improving services to its members, and by gaining fuller commitment of its members to GAPVOD's future. As members perceived GAPVOD as more effective, they would be more engaged members (paying dues and contributing their energies). As the vitality of its membership increased, donors would view GAPVOD as an essential partner, meriting funding, and government would recognize it as representing a crucial sector (civil society) in policy dialogue. A virtuous cycle could be established that would result in a more effective and solvent GAPVOD, more skilled NGOs and a more vital civil society sector that is increasingly capable of productive dialogue with government.

It is an ambitious track, but the only one that seemed feasible to the group. With CAP assistance, and a great deal of hard work from GAPVOD staff, it can work.

Background

> *GAPVOD (Ghana Association of Private Voluntary Organizations in Development) was established in 1980 as an umbrella organization for non-governmental organizations NGOs). It started as a small network of local and foreign NGOs operating in the country but has grown phenomenally over the years with a membership of almost 400. Currently, GAPVOD is recognized, both nationally and internationally, as a credible voice representing the NGO sector in Ghana.*
>
> *The Mission of GAPVOD is to seek the sustainable growth and development of NGOS and their active participation in the process of national development for the improved well-being of all Ghanaians, particularly the poor, marginalized and vulnerable.*
>
> *The Mission is pursued through:*
> - *Development Policy Advocacy and Lobbying;*
> - *Forging networking to benefit from expertise, knowledge and technical support*
> - *Serving as a clearing house for information relevant to the operations of members*

- *Facilitating development of partnership between the Government and NGOs and the creation of an enabling environment for the operation of members in support of national development agenda.*
- *Building capacity of members to enhance service delivery and performance*
- *Initiating and supporting research on issues relevant to the development, operation and performance of NGOs.* [1]

GAPVOD was nominated by USAID/Ghana to participate in the USAID-funded Capable Partners (CAP) program's Global Core Initiative (GCI) in Advocacy. GAPVOD's training in advocacy is complimented through CAP's institutional strengthening support. This document reports on the first stage of that assistance: a participatory self-assessment of GAPVOD, leading to an Institutional Improvement Plan for GAPVOD to address areas that the assessment indicated required urgent attention. GAPVOD will then present this plan to CAP, to its members, and to other donors for funding and ensure that it is implemented.

Process
The Consultant met with the Executive Director and a key staff member on 16 February to make a presentation on the process to be followed, field questions, and plan out the week's work schedule. Due to scheduling conflicts, the process needed to be compressed from four days to two days. All essential elements were completed and GAPVOD and the consultant agree that the product will be useful to GAPVOD. If more time were available, we might have helped the organization gain a more profound understanding of the organizational issues to be addressed in the upcoming year.

The Participants (6 male; one female) in the process included staff and a board member, as follows:

Name	Title
Kofi Adu	Executive Director
Frank Boakye-Dankwa	Business Manager
Evans Gyampoh	Communications Officer
Abdul Jaleel Odoom	National Service Person
Eric Dalinpuo	National Service Person
Andre Sossdorf	Intern
Kate Abam	Board Member

The first meeting began with an overview of the process and beginning to work on the Institutional Development Framework (IDF). The group began with a template that had been adapted to fit the likely requirements of an NGO network. GAPVOD, with facilitation assistance from the consultant, reviewed each "row" of the IDF, modified it to suit their circumstances and vision for the future, and assessed their own progress on the development continuum expressed in the text. This process was completed by mid-day on 20 February. The results of this effort (reflecting GAPVOD's edits) are included as

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[1] Ghana Association of Private Voluntary Organizations in Development (GAPVOD) Annual Report (2002-2003), page 1.

Appendix A: GAPVOD Institutional Development Framework – IDF. The Consultant recorded the scores for each row and all necessary comments in a separate document (presented as *Appendix B: GAPVOD Institutional Development Calculation Sheet – ICDS*.) Finally, the results of the assessment were presented to the group in a graphic form (*Appendix C: GAPVOD Institutional Development Profile – IDP*.)

With the assessment process behind them, the group turned its attention to determining priority areas for improvement. This was accomplished through a facilitated process whereby the group ranked the various rows of institutional capacity discussed in the IDF according to priority, with five gradations ranging from "Makes or Breaks GAPVOD" to "Not significant at this time." The group then selected among the highest priority items those for which GAPVOD's analysis indicated the organization was most weak. The following priorities emerged as being those areas for focus for institutional strengthening – that is, those that are absolutely essential to GAPVOD's survival and in which GAPVOD is currently seriously deficient:

1. More effective Board;
2. Improve services to members and increase member participation in GAPVOD; and
3. Improved fundraising and improved financial management.

Having brainstormed areas in urgent need of attention, GAPVOD then turned its attention to identifying activities that needed to be undertaken to get GAPVOD on a sustainable track. Those are summarized in *Appendix D: GAPVOD Institutional Strengthening Plan*.

An important conclusion of the sessions was that simply addressing the "rows" as they appeared in the IDF would not be sufficient to solve GAPVOD's current problems. As GAPVOD approaches its 25th anniversary, it is clear that it needs to reexamine its niche in Ghana and consider fundamental changes in the way it does business. Accordingly, an area for attention identified in the Improvement Plan calls for a strategic review of GAPVOD's role, its services, and its membership. It is expected that this will positively affect virtually all aspects of the organization.

Next Steps
GAPVOD will first take some time to reflect on the results of its assessment, and make any modifications that may seem warranted. It will then submit a proposal to CAP to fund its institutional improvement plan and seek funding from members and other donors to ensure its success. One year from now GAPVOD will re-apply the IDF Toolkit to itself to track its progress as a result of the improvement process. Those results will be reported to CAP.

In conducting the second assessment GAPVOD must remember there are two "scores" maintained for GAPVOD in the IDCS (*Appendix B*). The "raw score" reflects the placement of the IDF (for example, if two cells have been satisfied, the score would be "2".) For each row GAPVOD also assigned a "weight", based on the priority it assigned

to each characteristic.   Thus, the score referenced above might have "weight" of four, for an overall weighted score of eight.   In measuring progress in one year's time, it is against this weighted score that the comparisons must be made.   We are interested in overall percentage change in weighted score (weighted score for this assessment = 288.) This is important because it provides greater "credit" for improvements in areas that are of greater priority. Please note, however, that graphic depictions on the IDP should be based on the Raw Score only.

It is also expected that GAPVOD will adapt this tool to suit the majority of its members and provide technical assistance to them in institutional assessment as a new service to be provided by GAPVOD.

Workshop Rating
Post workshop evaluations of the workshop were as follows:

Question	Score 5=High; 1=Low
1. How useful do you find the IDF tool?	5
2. How useful to you was the assessment of your network's institutional capacity?	5
3. How do you rate the facilitator's ability to explain and communicate clearly?	5
4. How do you rate the facilitator's knowledge of institutional strengthening?	4.7
5. How do you rate the facilitator's faciliation technique and skills?	4.8
6. How clearly do you now understand yoru network's institutional strengthening needs?	4.3
7. How confident are you in your ability to repeat the IDF assessment without assistance of an outside facilitator?	3.5
8. To what extent do you believe that using the IDF will result in an institutional improvement in your organization?	4.8
General comments were favorable, but many thought that the workshop would have been more effective if greater time had been allocated to it (as was originally planned.)	

Comments were generally favorable, and reinforce the notion that the workshop would benefit from having the longer time normally planned for it.   Respondents indicated that they are prepared to replicate the assessment without the Facilitator, though confidence is lower than would be hoped.

AED and MSI have partnered with the following organizations to provide services in support of local NGO and network strengthening. They are specialists in a variety of technical sectors, and in cross-cutting areas such as advocacy, conflict, or public-private partnership building. In addition to contributing to the core activities of CAP, all of these partners' services are easily accessible through Associate Awards.

- The Advocacy Institute
- Aga Khan Foundation, U.S.A.
- The American Red Cross
- The Citizens Development Corps
- Freedom from Hunger
- Goodwill Industries International
- Institute for Multi-Track Democracy
- International Center for Not-for-Profit Law
- The Huairou Commission
- The Kenan Institute
- Mercy Corps
- National Cooperative Business Association
- ORT International Cooperation
- Social Impact

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AED ·
Center for Civil Society
and Governance

CAPABLE
PARTNERS
PROGRAM (CAP)

AED ·

C apable Partners (CAP) is a 5-year "Leader With Associates" (LWA) Cooperative Agreement between USAID/DCHA/PVC-ASHA and the Academy for Educational Development and its main partner Management Systems International. CAP is dedicated to improving the organizational capacity and sustainability of local NGOs and networks around the globe. A small amount of core funded activity seeks to improve NGO performance, stimulate creativity and enable communications across the globe. More broadly designed, Associate Awards can be used by Missions to further advance their specific objectives.

CORE FUNDED ACTIVITIES

1. Targeted Training, Technical Assistance and Grants

- **Training Series:** Three 18-month training programs for local NGO networks nominated by USAID Missions (up to sixteen organizations per program, covering all four USAID regions) to build capacity in Advocacy (year 1), Monitoring and Evaluation (year 2) and Building Partnerships (year 3).
- **NGO Institutional Development:** customized technical assistance program for each network participating in the Training Series; runs concurrently with each training program.
- **Action Grants:**: follow-on grants for selected organizations participating in the Training Series to implement action plans they have developed; grants range from $10,000 to $30,000; six to eight grants are anticipated for each program.

2. Innovation Grants Program

- These grants, ranging from $20,000 to $40,000, will enable local organizations nominated by USAID Missions (other than those participating in the targeted programs described above) to advance strategies in advocacy, service delivery, or sustainability approaches. Program details will be available in February 2004.

3. ngoconnect.net

- This is an interactive electronic portal for exchanging information, sharing best practices, building linkages, and participating in distance learning activities. It is also an on-line library providing synthesis, packaging and dissemination of practical information for NGO development from both USAID and non-USAID sources. ngoconnect.net is accessible to USAID Missions, participating NGO networks and the general public.

ASSOCIATE AWARDS (BUY-INS)

CAP is designed to strengthen organizations across sectors, such as population/health, environment, education, information technologies, gender, conflict mitigation, business development, civil society and others. CAP is particularly well-suited when a multi- or cross-sector approach is warranted. CAP can be used by individual Missions, regional programs or other operating units, and can be used in humanitarian, post-conflict or development contexts. Sample activities under CAP could include:

- Assisting NGO networks, alliances, coalitions to support their ability to develop coordination strategies and partnership arrangements
- Working with a Mission to design and implement a country-specific or regional NGO strengthening program
- An NGO training program in coalition-building in one or more sectors (for example, to create coalitions between education and health NGOs to combat trafficking)
- A small grants program to catalyze public-private partnerships in any sector
- A workshop to a group of HIV-AIDS NGOs on financial management, resource diversification and endowments

For both short-term and long-term activities in any technical sector, Associate Awards may be issued separately between USAID operating units and AED. No competition is required once the Cognizant Technical officer (CTO) provides concurrence that the activity fits within CAP overall goals. Each Associate Award has a separate activity description, budget and reporting requirements. While the standard provisions of AED's Leader Award apply to Associate Awards, country or regional Missions make and manage the awards, determine substantial involvement and reporting requirements. These awards may be made through July 31, 2008.

Step 1. Notify your local Office of Procurement to confirm its participation.

Step 2. Contact the Cognizant Technical Officer (CTO) Adele Liskov (aliskov@usaid.gov) at the Office of Private Voluntary Cooperation - American Schools & Hospitals Abroad (PVC-ASHA), Bureau for Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance and request her concurrence to the issuance of a cooperative agreement or grant under the AED Leader Award. She will advise accordingly.

Step 3. Send a request for program description with proposed goals, objectives, scope and timing of the activity to Barbara Howald (bhowald@aed.org) in the AED Center for Civil Society and Governance. AED will promptly respond with a proposed program description, personnel and budget.

Step 4. Your Agreement Officer will negotiate the cooperative agreement or grant directly with AED.